

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the Office Action mailed on January 22, 2003. Claims 1-21 are pending in the application. Claims 1-21 have been rejected. The claims have been amended to further clarify the subject matter regarded as the invention.

A clean version of the amended claims with instructions for entry pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(c)(1)(i) is included above. A marked-up version of the amended claims pursuant to 37 CFR 1.121(c)(1)(ii) is attached as Appendix I.

This amendment is to expedite prosecution and should not be construed as acquiescence in any ground of rejection. Applicants reserve the right to prosecute the originally filed claims in the future.

Rejections Under 35 USC 103

The claims have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Maxwell et al. (US Patent No. 5,675,784) in view of Blinn et al. (US Patent No. 5,999,914). The rejection is respectfully traversed. Applicants submit that the claims of the instant invention are non-obvious and patentable over the claims of the cited art.

① With respect to claim 1, Maxwell does not teach storing both a manufacturer SKU and a customer SKU. Specifically, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests “storing the product data, the product data including both a manufacturer SKU that identifies the product and a customer SKU that identifies the product, the customer SKU being associated with a customer for which the product data is being stored for subsequent distribution to the customer, wherein the stored product data is suitable for use by the customer in an electronic catalog.” Rather, Maxwell describes a single SKU as typically used to identify a product. Accordingly, Maxwell teaches away from storing two separate SKUs for a single product.

Blinn fails to cure the deficiencies of the primary reference. The Examiner cites column 1, lines 6-9 of Blinn, stating that Blinn discloses the method of

distributing data. Applicant respectfully traverses this assertion. Rather, Blinn relates to “electronic merchandising systems...for providing customizable and flexible merchandising promotions over the Internet. Column 1, lines 6-11. Thus, Blinn is entirely unrelated to the presently pending claims. In fact, Blinn also fails to disclose or suggest storing both a manufacturer SKU and a customer SKU. As a result, combining the references would fail to achieve the desired result. For instance, Blinn discloses that “in some cases one promotion may give the consumer a free music tape when the consumer buys three music tapes.” Blinn, col. 2, lines 49-51. It follows that combining Blinn with Maxwell would yield merchandising promotions, but would not cure the deficiencies of the primary reference. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 1 is allowable as amended. As Claims 2-21 are dependent upon Claim 1, Applicants submit that these claims are also allowable.

The dependent claims further recite additional limitations that are not further disclosed in Maxwell. For example, with respect to claims 2 and 3, the Examiner refers to col. 6, lines 15-18 and lines 45-48. However, the cited portions of Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests a data entry template that “includes a listing of potential values associated with each of the attributes in the category of the classified product, wherein the listing of potential values identify values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute.” For instance, an attribute may be speed or size. As recited in claim 2, each attribute has an associated list of potential values that may be selected as a value for the attribute. The cited portion of Maxwell merely discloses consistent description format. Maxwell fails to disclose a process or manner of providing such a description format. In fact, FIG. 8 indicates that a value is already associated with each attribute. As such, Maxwell teaches away from providing a list of potential values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute. A quantity is entered, but is not selected from a list of potential quantities. Rather, the user must manually enter this quantity. Moreover, with respect to claim 3, neither of the references discloses repeating the listing of potential values for the classified product when the attribute group associated with the classified product is indicated to be a repeating group in the data model. Although col. 6, lines 15-18 of Maxwell disclose a loop that is used to “create” components, Maxwell fails to disclose or suggest repeating a listing of potential values....when the attribute group associated with the classified product is indicated to be a repeating group in the data model. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 2 and 3 are allowable over the cited art.

Similarly, with respect to claims 4, 5 and 15, Applicant was unable to find a reference to a possible value list associated with each attribute that identifies values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute, where each of the attributes has at least one of the values in the associated possible value list. Rather col. 7, lines 60-67 of Maxwell appear to indicate that the data structure may store values, not that such values may be selected from a possible value list. Similarly, with respect to claim 5, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests a possible unit list associated with each attribute, where the possible unit list includes units that are selectable. Rather, as indicated in FIG. 8 of Maxwell, it appears that the units (e.g., Hz, MHz) are not selected from a list of units, but are presented in the component description. As stated above, the user may merely enter a quantity associated with the static description. Accordingly, Maxwell teaches away from the invention of claims 4, 5, and 15.

Similarly, with respect to claim 16, the Examiner cites col. 5, lines 43-52 of Maxwell, which states that “[c]omponents have attributes, and attributes have specification values associated with them.” However, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests classifying the product according to a data model having one or more classes, wherein each of the classes is arranged to identify one or more associated categories and each of the categories is arranged to identify an associated attribute group having one or more attributes, each attribute having an associated possible value list that identifies values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute. Moreover Maxwell fails to disclose or suggest selecting at least one of the values in the associated possible value list for selected attributes in the associated attribute group. Furthermore, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests inputting the selected values for the product to the system product data file. In fact, Maxwell suggests that each attribute has a single value associated therewith rather than a list of selectable values. Accordingly, Maxwell teaches away from the invention of claim 16.

With respect to claims 6 and 9, the Examiner admits that Blinn fails to disclose “storing a system SKU associated with the product in the product header,” “storing a manufacturer SKU associated with the product in the product header,” or “associating the product header with product information characterizing the product.” While col. 11, lines 1-15 of Blinn discloses a key-value pair to uniquely identify a particular item indicating a price and quantity of ordered items, Blinn fails to cure the deficiencies of the primary reference. In fact, Blinn relates to items that have been ordered, rather than merely storing catalog data independent of orders that may

processed from a catalog that is composed from stored catalog data such as that claimed. In other words, the presently claimed invention enables product data to be stored and ultimately transmitted for use in catalogs. Stated another way, the presently claimed invention is used to compose a catalog (e.g., by a manufacturer receiving requested product data). Blinn may only be used to identify products that have been ordered from a catalog. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 6 and 9 are allowable over the cited art.

With respect to claims 8 and 17, the Examiner cites col. 13, lines 13-35 of Blinn, which indicates that each column in a product table may have a schema field, which may, for instance, be an image file name. However, Blinn fails to disclose linking a product header to one or more images illustrating the product, as recited in claim 8. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 8 and 17 are allowable over the cited art.

With respect to claims 10, 11, and 19, as set forth above, Maxwell neither discloses capturing and storing product data including both a manufacturer SKU and a customer SKU. Blinn fails to cure the deficiencies of the primary reference. With respect to Claims 10 and 19, Applicants submit that neither Blinn nor Maxwell disclose or suggest specifying one or more countries for which the product is adapted for sale. Similarly, with respect to Claim 11, the cited art neither discloses nor suggests providing one or more possible countries that are selectable as countries for which the product is adapted for sale. Although the Examiner cites col. 10, lines 65-67, this indicates that the messages value identifies the language used for error messages, rather than identifying a country for which a product is adapted for sale. In other words, Blinn neither discloses nor suggests the purpose for which a country might be specified as claimed. Blinn merely discloses the ability to provide error messages in different languages. Accordingly, the combination of Blinn and Maxwell would fail to achieve the desired result, which is to enable product data to be stored that indicates which countries a product is adapted for sale. For instance, electronics may be designed in different ways in order to be used in different countries (and are therefore compatible with various electrical specifications). Applicant therefore respectfully submits that claims 10, 11, and 19 are allowable over the cited art.

In addition, with respect to claims 12-14 and 20-21, although col. 5, lines 30-42 and 53-55 of Maxwell disclose defining a group for “similar kinds of components” and groups similar types of products, such as “hardware” and “computer systems,”

Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests linking to or identifying one or more related products that are recommended as [related to] compatible with the product as recited in claims 12 and 20. Similarly, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests linking to platform compatibility information associated with the product indicating one or more platforms that are compatible with the product, as recited in claim 13. Moreover, with respect to claim 21, the Examiner cites col. 5, lines 10-12 of Maxwell, which illustrates “but one example of hardware on which the subject invention may be implemented.” However, Maxwell neither discloses nor suggests “inputting to the system product data file platform compatibility information associated with the product indicating one or more platforms that are compatible with the product.” In other words, the presently claimed invention enables various platforms to be identified that are compatible with each product for which data is stored. The combination of Maxwell and Blinn would fail to provide this desired functionality. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 12-14 and 20-21 are non-obvious and patentable over Maxwell in view of Blinn. Applicants therefore respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC 103.

Conclusion

The Applicants respectfully maintain that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance for this Application from the Examiner. Should any unresolved issues remain, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

Respectfully submitted,

BEYER, WEAVER & THOMAS, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elise R. Heilbrunn', written over a horizontal line.

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APPENDIX I
MARKED-UP COPY OF AMENDED CLAIMS

1. (Twice Amended) A method of capturing data for use in a catalog, comprising:
 capturing product data for a product according to a data model, the data model having one or more classes, each one of the one or more classes being defined by one or more categories, each of the one or more categories being defined by an attribute group having one or more attributes; and
 storing the product data, the product data including both a manufacturer SKU that identifies the product and a customer SKU that identifies the product, the customer SKU being associated with a customer for which the product data is being stored for subsequent distribution to the customer, wherein the stored product data is suitable for use by the customer in an electronic catalog.
2. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein capturing product data includes:
 classifying a product to be entered according to the data model; and
 rendering a data entry template associated with the category of the classified product, wherein the data entry template includes a listing of potential values associated with each of the attributes in the category of the classified product, wherein the listing of potential values identify values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute.
3. The method as recited in claim 2, wherein the rendering further includes repeating the listing of potential values for the classified product when the attribute group associated with the classified product is indicated to be a repeating group in the data model.
4. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein each attribute is associated with a possible value list including values that are selectable and selected searchable

attributes are specified, wherein the step of capturing product data includes reviewing product information for a particular product and selecting specific values from the possible value list for each of the selected searchable attributes.

5. The method as recited in claim 4, wherein each attribute is further associated with a possible unit list including units that are selectable and wherein the step of capturing product data further includes selecting specific units from the possible unit list for at least some of the selected searchable attributes.

6. The method as recited in claim 1, further including creating a product header that is associated with the product, wherein creating the product header includes
storing a system SKU associated with the product in the product header;
storing a manufacturer SKU associated with the product in the product header;
and
associating the product header with product information characterizing the product.

7. The method as recited in claim 6, wherein the product information includes one of the one or more categories and a manufacturer product description, the manufacturer product description describing standard features of the product.

8. The method as recited in claim 6, further including:
linking the product header to one or more images illustrating the product.

9. The method as recited in claim 6, further including:
linking the product header to a marketing description of the product.

10. The method as recited in claim 1, further including:
specifying one or more countries for which the product is adapted for sale.

11. The method as recited in claim 1, further including:
providing one or more possible countries that are selectable as countries for which the product is adapted for sale.

12. (Once Amended) The method as recited in claim 1, further including:
linking to one or more related products that are recommended as [related to]
compatible with the product.
13. (Once Amended) The method as recited in claim 1, further including:
linking to platform compatibility information associated with the product
indicating one or more platforms that are compatible with the product.
14. The method as recited in claim 1, further including:
providing one or more possible platforms that are selectable as platforms with
which the product is compatible.
15. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein each attribute has an associated
possible value list that identifies values that are selectable as values for the associated
attribute and wherein storing the product data further includes:
storing selected attributes in an attribute table, each of the selected attributes
being identified by a system SKU and having at least one of the values in the
associated possible value list.
16. The method as recited in claim 1, wherein capturing product data for the
product includes:
classifying the product according to a data model having one or more classes,
wherein each of the classes is arranged to identify one or more associated categories
and each of the categories is arranged to identify an associated attribute group having
one or more attributes, each attribute having an associated possible value list that
identifies values that are selectable as values for the associated attribute;
selecting at least one of the values in the associated possible value list for
selected attributes in the associated attribute group; and
inputting the selected values for the product to the system product data file.
17. The method as recited in claim 16, wherein capturing data for the product
further includes:
inputting one or more images illustrating the product to the system product
data file.

18. The method as recited in claim 16, wherein capturing data for the product further includes:

inputting a marketing description associated with the product to the system product data file.

19. The method as recited in claim 16, wherein capturing data for the product further includes:

inputting to the system product data file one or more countries for which the product is adapted for sale.

20. (Once Amended) The method as recited in claim 16, wherein capturing data for the product further includes:

inputting to the system product data file a list identifying one or more related products that are recommended as [related to] compatible with the product.

21. (Once Amended) The method as recited in claim 16, wherein capturing data for the product further includes:

inputting to the system product data file platform compatibility information associated with the product indicating one or more platforms that are compatible with the product.